

**INFORMAL COMPETITIVE SOLICITATION  
for  
Maintenance of the BuylowaArt.com Online Store**

**INTRODUCTION**

In accordance with the informal competition procedures provided for in 11 Iowa Administrative Code rule 106.9, the Department of Cultural Affairs/Iowa Arts Council (the Agency) is seeking a web hosting and development provider (Service Provider) to provide store hosting, maintenance, continued application development, and e-marketing services for the online store BuylowaArt.com. The Agency anticipates that the term of any resulting contract will be one year, with the option to renew annually for up to 5 years beginning on July 1, 2006.

Service Providers interested in providing these services should submit proposals to the Iowa Arts Council, 600 E Locust St, Des Moines, IA 50319, no later than 3:00 p.m. (local time), May 15, 2006. Any proposal received after this deadline will be rejected and returned to the Service Provider.

***Proposals should include the Service Provider's cost proposal and sufficient information regarding the Service Provider's ability to perform the services sought to enable the Agency to make a judgment about the Service Provider's ability to perform the work identified in the Scope of Services. The Service Provider should also include references with its proposal.***

The dates set forth below are for informational planning purposes only. The Agency reserves the right to change the dates:

April 21, 2006	Submit Informal Competitive Solicitation to TSB web page
April 24, 2006	Submit Informal Competitive Solicitation to three potential Service Providers
May 15, 2006	Proposals due
May 22, 2006	Select successful Service Provider
June 15, 2006	Deadline for executing contract

The Agency will utilize an evaluation committee made up of employees of the Agency to evaluate the proposals. **From the date of issuance of this Informal Competitive Solicitation until announcement of the successful Service Provider, Service Providers may not contact any employee of the State of Iowa other than the identified contact person about this RFP.** Service Providers may contact Mary Sundet Jones, Iowa Arts Council Division Administrator, in writing with questions related to the interpretation of this Informal Competitive Solicitation and the procurement process. Written responses to all questions received will be provided to all potential Service Providers. If a Service Provider or someone acting on a Service Provider's behalf attempts to discuss this RFP orally or in writing with any members of the evaluation committee, or any employee of the State of Iowa, other than Mary Sundet Jones, the Service Provider may be disqualified.

The Agency reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part, to advertise for new proposals, to abandon the need for such services, and to cancel this Informal Competitive Solicitation at any time prior to the execution of the written contract.

All information submitted by a Service Provider may be treated as a public record by the Agency unless the Service Provider properly requests that the information be treated as confidential information in accordance with the public records laws of the State of Iowa at the time its proposal is submitted.

The costs of preparation and delivery of the bid proposal are solely the responsibility of the Service Provider.

By submitting a proposal, the Service Provider agrees that the Agency may copy the proposal for purposes of facilitating the evaluation of the proposal or to respond to requests for public records and represents that such copying will not violate the rights of any third party.

By submitting a proposal, the Service Provider agrees that it will not bring any claim or have any cause of action against the Agency based on any misunderstanding concerning the information provided herein or concerning the Agency's failure, negligent or otherwise, to provide the bidder with pertinent information as intended by this Informal Competitive Solicitation.

Notice of intent to award the contract will be sent by mail to all Service Providers submitting a timely proposal. Negotiation and execution of contract with the successful Service Provider shall be completed no later than June 15, 2006. If the apparent successful Service Provider fails to negotiate and deliver an executed contract by that date, the Agency may, in its sole discretion, cancel the award and award the contract to the next highest ranked Service Provider.

### **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

The successful Service Provider will provide store hosting and maintenance on the World Wide Web, continued application development, and e-marketing services for the online store BuyIowaArt.com.

### **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Proposals will be reviewed by the evaluation committee. The committee will consider all information provided in the proposal when making its recommendation and may consider relevant information from other sources. *The evaluation committee **will award the contract to the responsible Service Provider submitting the best proposal. The lowest priced proposal is not necessarily the best proposal.*** The evaluation committee's selection will be subject to the final approval of the Agency.

The proposals will be evaluated and a recommendation will be made using the following criteria, which are listed in no particular order:

- a. Cost, including detailed breakdown of proposed services and their individual costs;
- b. Past performance of work that is identical or similar to the scope of services identified;
- c. Experience and references that demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Agency, the expertise and ability of the Service Provider to provide the Scope of Services described in the Informal Competitive Solicitation; and
- d. The capacity of the Service Provider to complete responsibilities described in the Scope of Services.

If there is a tie for the best proposal and only one of the Service Providers is an Iowa business, the Iowa business shall be given preference over the out of state Service Providers.